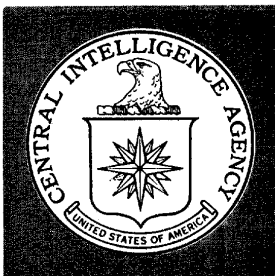


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CIA/SAVA /WVIND 710925



WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 25 September 1971

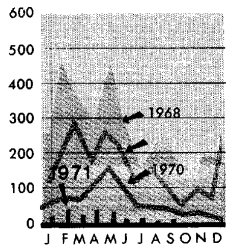
NSA Declassification/Release instructions on File.

For the President Only

~~Top Secret~~

SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

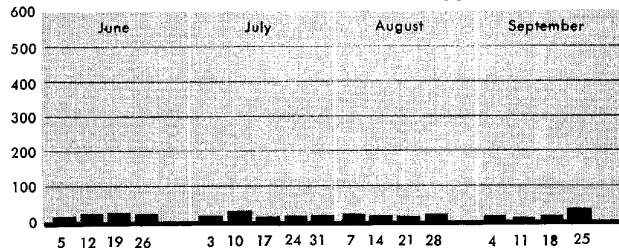
1968-1971
Weekly average for each month



JUNE 1971 - SEPTEMBER 1971
Weekly data as reported

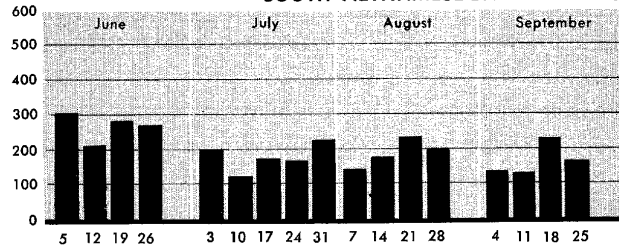
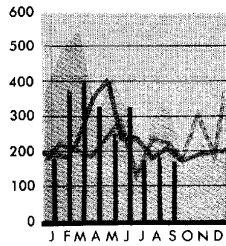
US BATTLE DEATHS

increased to 30 from the 13 of last week.



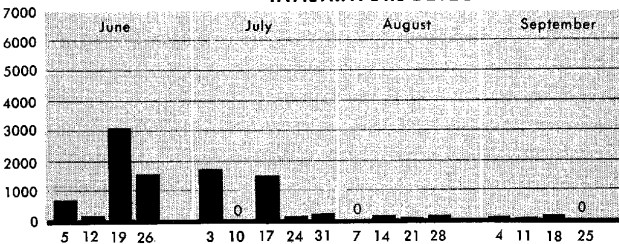
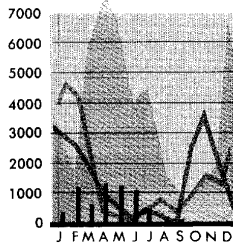
SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS

decreased to 163 from last week's 236. The official total will change as late reports are received and will be lower than the figures released to the press by the GVN.



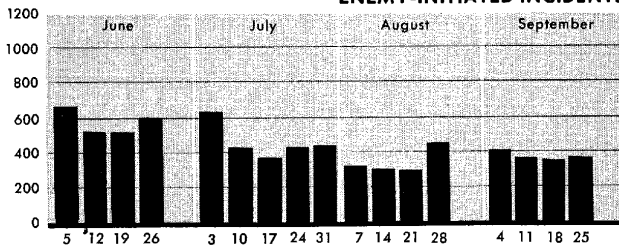
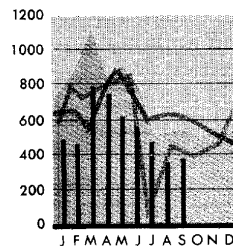
INFILTRATORS DETECTED IN PIPELINE

stand at zero. The infiltration estimate since 1 October 1970 remains at some 75,800 - 77,300.



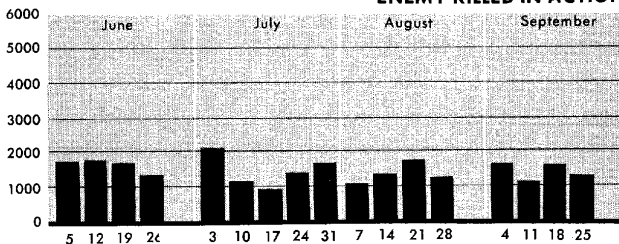
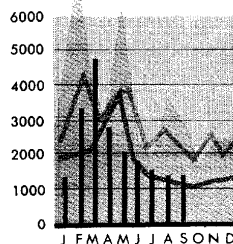
ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS

increased to 389 from last week's 366.



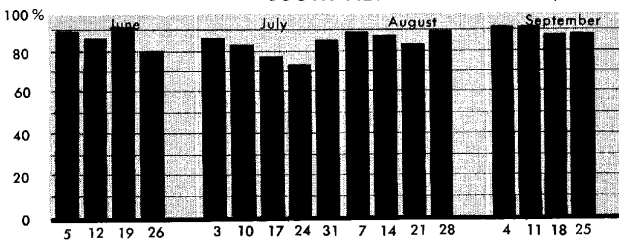
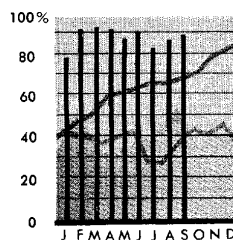
ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION

numbered 1,331, a sharp drop from last week's 1,527.



SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS

as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by GVN forces increased slightly to 87% from last week's 84 percent.



Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Activity

In South Vietnam, although there was a slight increase in enemy-initiated incidents in Military Regions (MR's) 3 and 4, the overall level of activity remained low throughout the country. All source reporting, however, makes it appear that there will be an increase in activity this week as the Communists intensify their efforts to do whatever they can to disrupt the 3 October Presidential election. These efforts will probably produce attacks by fire, small-scale ground assaults, and selective acts of terrorism. Communications intelligence has indicated the movement of at least one regiment (the 209th) of the North Vietnamese 7th Division to the Tay Ninh border from east of Kompong Cham City. If the Communists should succeed in moving additional major units from Cambodia into MR 3, their capabilities for ground action along the approaches to Saigon would be materially enhanced. If unit moves as suggested by these preliminary indicators are indeed in train, these moves are probably not keyed directly to the 3 October elections. Instead, the Communists are probably positioning their forces to exploit post-election discord or to execute actions planned for the months ahead.

In northernmost Laos, 17 September aerial photography of the Chinese Communist road terminus showed some southward clearing of vegetation and a partial redeployment of antiaircraft defenses. In northeast Laos, enemy forces are preparing to do battle with advancing friendly troops on a clearing operation above Luang Prabang. On the Plaine des Jarres front, government troops have occupied the air strip at the old Neutralist capital of Muong Soui, and have moved a few armored cars on to the northwestern section of the Plaine. In the central Panhandle of south Laos, a fresh irregular battalion is moving toward Muong Phalane to replace the three tired and malaria stricken units scheduled to pull out next week after a final joint effort to drive the NVA from the town. Farther south around Saravane, and on the Bolovens Plateau, friendly forces are continuing their offensive in spite of steady enemy harassment and probing.

During the past week in Cambodia, enemy military and terrorist activity showed a slight increase. Highlighting the terrorism effort was the 26 September grenading of a recreation center near the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh in which two Americans were killed and 10 others wounded. Elsewhere, the Communists have attacked Cambodian forces and South Vietnamese Army positions in several widely separated areas. The weekend attacks near Krek and the Cambodian-South Vietnamese border may be intended to screen the movement of North Vietnamese elements back to South Vietnam in preparation for widespread future action.

Enemy Infiltration

No infiltration groups were detected during the past week, hence the estimate of personnel moving toward South Vietnam-Cambodia since 1 October 1970 remains at some 75,800 - 77,300. The southward movement by rail and truck through Vinh in North Vietnam of a high volume of weapons, ammunition, and materiel, however, provides further evidence of preparations for the upcoming dry season logistics campaign. In north Laos, an increase in enemy truck traffic indicates that the annual effort to resupply Communist forces near the Plaine des Jarres has begun earlier than in past years. Meanwhile, logistics elements in south Laos, which have been attempting to maintain and improve the route structure, are now reporting numerous localized difficulties. Higher authorities have ordered that the roads in the Panhandle be ready by early October, but the recent problems could well delay the reopening of certain segments of the southern logistics system until the end of October. Elsewhere, the Communists are closing the gap in the new road through the western end of the DMZ. Although this new road could supplement the logistics network in south Laos, its usefulness for the near term is limited in view of the imminent onset of the rainy season in this region.

South Vietnam Developments

President Thieu remains determined to proceed with the 3 October Presidential election as scheduled. Vice President Ky is still trying to forge a coalition of students, veterans groups, Buddhists, and any others he can find who dislike Thieu with the object of mounting demonstrations and generating enough pressure to compel Thieu to postpone the election by resigning. To date, Ky's efforts have failed to produce much visible action on the streets. There were a few demonstrations over the past weekend, but none of a scale or scope taxing the GVN's ability to contain them quickly. Minor disorders are likely to occur during the days ahead, but the GVN police and security services seem well aware of opposition intentions and, so far, very much in control of events. With varying degrees of intensity, the An Quang Buddhists, the Viet Cong, and other opposition groups have called for a boycott of the elections, but present signs indicate that the government will probably be able to secure a reasonable turnout and the majority vote that Thieu is seeking.

Despite the extent to which the GVN now seems to have matters well in hand, tempers are elevated and the political atmosphere is unsettled. In the present situation, luck or mischance could prove as important a factor as management, good or bad. Should the GVN's handling of some minor incident inadvertently give Thieu's opponents a martyr, for example, or should an initially small series of demonstrations get out of hand, the atmosphere could quickly turn turbulent and sour.

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Thieu is [REDACTED] irritated at the Senate's passage of its 22 September proclamation, which was couched in moderate and deliberately elliptical language but was nonetheless a clear manifestation of disapproval of Thieu's current course of action. At a minimum, Thieu has a considerable amount of fence mending to do with his normally pliable legislature.

In spite of legislative grumbling, however, and indications of restlessness among some of his senior executive branch associates (e.g. Prime Minister Khiem), Thieu still appears to enjoy the solid support of the military establishment. So long as this remains the case, the GVN should be able to cope with any demonstrations or manifestations of dissidence organized by non-military political groups.

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